

GSK inks pact with Francis Crick Institute

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Singapore: The Francis Crick Institute and GSK are to partner on an open innovation collaboration exploring new avenues of medical research and drug discovery across a broad range of diseases, with a view to achieving breakthroughs in the understanding of human disease. This is the first collaboration to be established between the Crick and a pharmaceutical company.

Teams of scientists from each organisation will work side-by-side in integrated teams at the Crick's world-leading centre of biomedical research in the heart of London and GSK's global R&D hub in Stevenage. GSK and the Crick believe that this fluid interchange of skills and ideas could lead to significant discoveries in the basic scientific understanding of human disease, which could ultimately improve the success rate for discovering new medicines.

The GSK-Crick open science collaboration will combine the specialised disease biology knowledge of the Crick's scientists with the pharmaceutical R&D expertise of GSK scientists, opening up possibilities for scientific discovery that would not be possible for each partner working alone. Together, these world-leading researchers will conduct biological research projects focused on learning more about how diseases take hold in the body and how they could best be treated, which in turn is expected to result in increased efficiency and reduced attrition in R&D.

Mr David Roblin, chief operating officer and director of Scientific Translation at the Francis Crick Institute, said, "This truly represents a landmark agreement in open science. In the Crick we aim to have industrial scientists embedded in our laboratories and fully integrated with our existing scientific groups. Together the scientists will accelerate breakthroughs in the understanding of human health and disease. GSK is an outstanding partner to commence this effort and I am excited to see what we deliver together."

GSK's president of pharmaceuticals R&D, Mr Patrick Vallance, said, "As a company with deep research roots in the UK, we're enormously proud of this country's vibrant biosciences community and the cutting-edge biomedical research that takes

place here. That's why we continue to invest a quarter of our R&D spend in the UK and have collaborations in place with some of the country's top research institutions, which rank among the best in the world."

GSK and the Crick will contribute in-kind resources, including lab space and the scientific expertise of 20 staff to the collaboration. GSK will also provide important research tools to the collaboration, including access to its non-development compound library, key antibodies, reagents and technologies, which will be used to address key questions in disease biology.

A number of projects within this collaboration exploring diseases including HIV, malaria and cancer are expected to start in 2015. This will build up to a steady state of 10-15 projects in 2016. The ongoing nature of the Crick-GSK collaboration is expected to foster strong links between the organisations, as well as providing an excellent channel for the training and development of talented staff.